

# Intimacy & Parkinson's

Sheila Silver MA, DHS

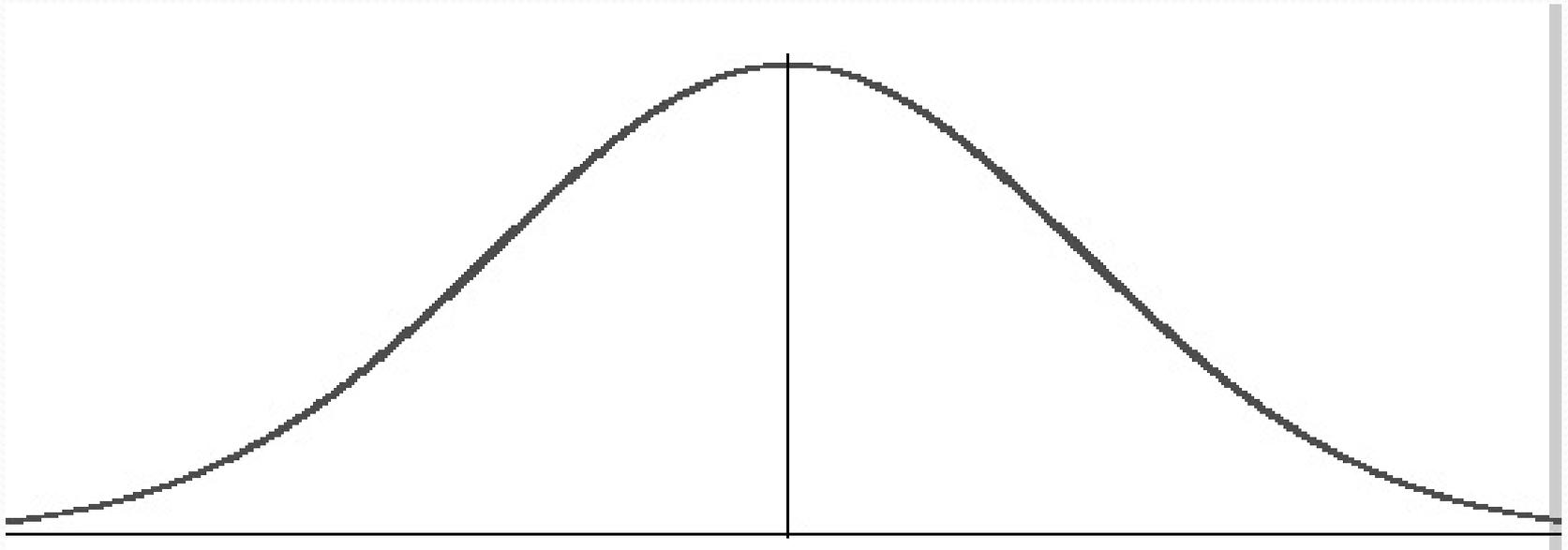
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# Agenda

- Sexual challenges
- Expanding the opportunities for physical intimacy.
- Communicating about intimacy.
- Deepening emotional intimacy
- Talking to health care professionals

Sexual dysfunction is often an issue  
as PD progresses.

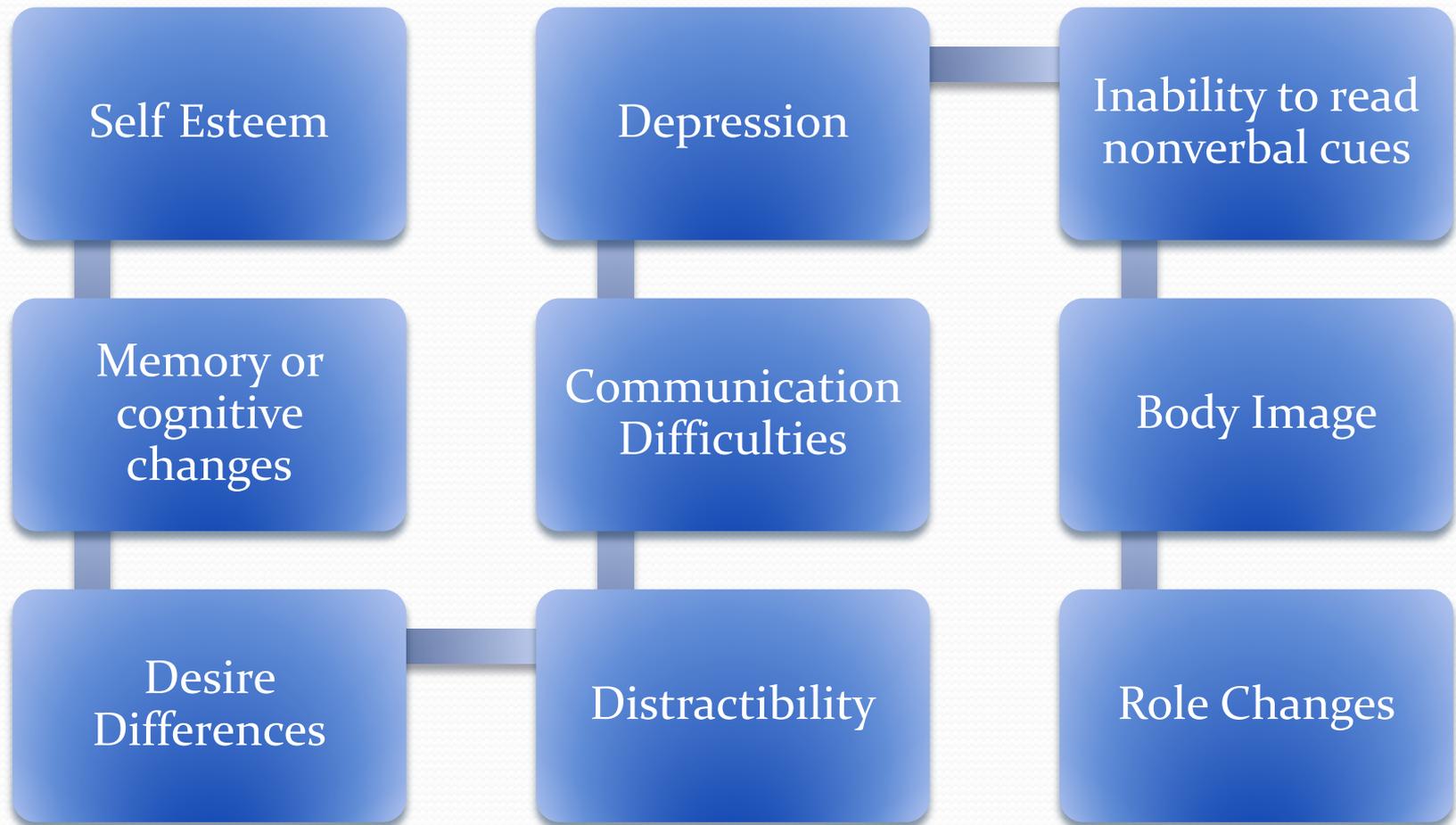
*But this is also true with normal aging.*



# Physical Sexual Challenges

- Slowness of movement, tremor, and rigidity can interfere with lovemaking.
- Reduced desire due to fatigue or medications.
- Men often struggle with getting or keeping erections, or delayed ejaculation.
- Women may experience dryness and pain.

# Other Things That Impact Sexuality



# Expand How You Think About Sexuality

View sex as an opportunity for shared pleasure with no goal.



# Make Affection a Destination

Relaxing touch	Holding hands
Sensual touch	A long embrace
Kissing	Holding each other in bed
Touching with “still” hands	Stroking face, hair, or skin.
No agenda pleasuring	



# What's On The Menu?

1. **Erotic touching** (taking turns or simultaneously *Including genitals but not necessarily focused on that exclusively.*)
2. **Naked bath or shower together.**
3. **Using a vibrator or other sex toy for pleasure.**
4. **Orgasm for one or both people without penetration.**
5. **Intercourse**

# Practical Solutions

- Lubricants
- Satin sheets
- Oil for sensual touch
- Don't wait until bedtime, make morning or afternoon dates.
- Different positions
- Stimulation in different ways with or without orgasm



# A Word About Planning

Parties, vacations, a good meal,  
and sexuality all involve  
planning.

# Patience

- It might take longer to get aroused or to reach orgasm.
- Sometimes orgasm is hard to find.
- Enjoying where you are rather than where you want to go. (mindfulness)

# Derole and just be a couple (not patient/carepartner)



# Transitioning to Sensuality/Sexuality

“Bridging Time” is a buffer of alone time  
before being physically intimate

to drop into your body,

and relax...

# Ideas for “Bridging/Transition Time”

- Time on your own to prepare to be physically close.
- Relaxed bathing
- Listening to music.
- Changing clothes into something that makes you feel handsome or beautiful.
- Meditating
- Reading or thinking about something erotic.
- Using a special scent (cologne/perfume, candle, lotion)
- Yoga
- Journaling

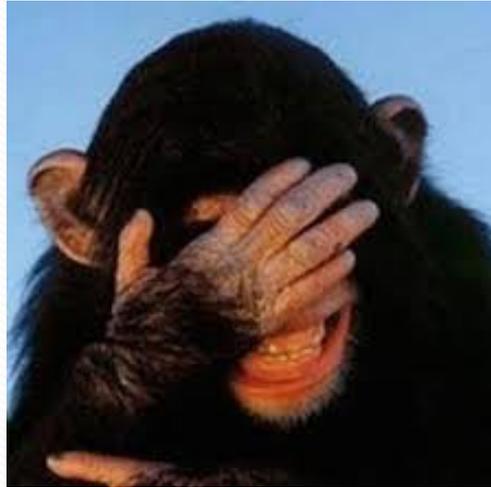
# Communication



When one of you has Parkinson's it helps to have conversations about intimacy in a loving but "matter of fact" way.

# Conversations can be hard...

- Embarrassing



- Feel awkward

- ...because you have no experience with this type of conversation.

# Look at your physical environment



Between Weekdays



# Emotional Intimacy:

## **Connect With Your Hearts**

- Make time for fun together.
- Share positive things with each other.
- Step away from technology, and give each other your full attention.
- Communicate fondness and appreciation.



Talk to your doctor



# Remember you have a whole team of support

Medical doctor/PA/NP

Physical therapist

Occupational therapist

Social worker

Nurse

# helpful tips

- Come prepared with questions.
- Write them down.
- Include detailed information
  1. Description of the problem
  2. When did it start?
  3. What solutions have you tried?
  4. What makes the problem better or worse?
  5. How is this impacting the partner? (Bring them.)
  6. Do you want information, referral, prescription?

# Practice Saying Your Sexual Problems Out Loud

- Read it
- Discuss it with your partner
- Talk to someone you trust



*Practice uncomfortable words.*

# Let the doctor's office know in advance.

- When you make the appointment, inform them that you might need extra time.
- Tell the nurse that you wish to discuss some sexual health concerns.
- The nurse can inform the doctor.
- The doctor may even ask first.

# Start with it!

- You have a limited time
- Start with your questions.
- Ask even the questions that you think are silly.
- Most doctors feel comfortable with an organized patient.
- Ask the doctor for a referral.
- American Association of Sex Educators, Therapists, and Counselors [www.aasect.org](http://www.aasect.org)

# Take Home/Open Book Quiz

- What is working well in our relationship?
- What could we do to create more intimacy?  
(physically and emotionally)
- My favorite way you express physical intimacy is...
- One thing I would like more of is...
- How can we adjust to the way PD/aging is impacting our sexual life?



# Summary

1. Expand how you think about sex.
2. Communicate with your partner.
3. Include your healthcare team in solving issues.



Sheila Silver MA, DHS, ACS  
921 SW Washington St. #460  
Portland, OR 97205  
503-327-8334  
[www.drsheilasilver.com](http://www.drsheilasilver.com)